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ABSTRACT

The Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE), the Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (P&A) and the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) jointly developed this guide on child abuse and neglect. It is designed to assist school districts in adopting written policy and procedures related to the reporting and investigation of abuse and neglect. School personnel are in a unique position to observe or detect symptoms of abuse or neglect. Therefore, it is important, and legally mandated, for school districts to have an established policy to facilitate the rapid and coordinated response to a suspected case of abuse or neglect. While the general theme of the policy is universal, each school district must develop, or revise, its own policy and procedures based on its unique characteristics, organizational structure, strengths and constraints. It is hoped that this booklet will assist in the promulgation of such policies or procedures. This booklet is divided into several sections: Introduction; DCF; P&A; and Guidelines. Where appropriate, each lists either specific statutory citations or "best practices" references. For ease of reading, statutory language may be paraphrased. "Best Practices" notations are not statutory mandates but indicate the administrative procedures currently in use by either DCF or P&A. (Author)

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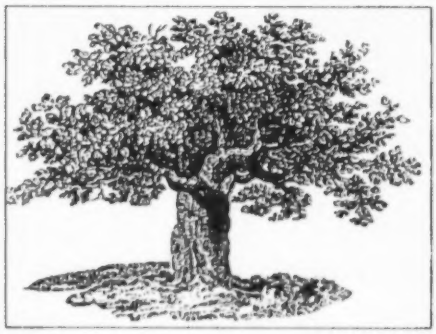
Guidelines for

DEVELOPING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT



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Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner of Education

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FOREWORD

The Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Connecticut State Department of Education (SDE), the Connecticut Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (P&A) and the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents (CAPSS) jointly developed this guide on child abuse and neglect. It is designed to assist school districts in adopting written policy and procedures related to the reporting and investigation of abuse and neglect.

School personnel are in a unique position to observe or detect symptoms of abuse or neglect. Therefore, it is important, and legally mandated, for school districts to have an established policy to facilitate the rapid and coordinated response to a suspected case of abuse or neglect.

While the general theme of the policy is universal, each school district must develop, or revise, its own policy and procedures based on its unique characteristics, organizational structure, strengths and constraints. It is hoped that this booklet will assist in the promulgation of such policies or procedures.

While comprehensive, this booklet should not be relied upon as the single source of information. Periodically, statutes are amended and preferred practice policies change. Therefore, you should always consult with your own legal representative and experts.

This booklet is divided into several sections: Introduction; DCF; P&A; and Guidelines. Where appropriate, each lists either specific statutory citations or "best practices" references. For ease of reading, statutory language may be paraphrased. "Best Practices" notations are not statutory mandates but indicate the administrative procedures currently in use by either DCF or P&A.

Kristine D. Ragaglia
Commissioner
Department of Children and Families

Theodore S. Sergi
Commissioner
Department of Education

James D. McGaughey
Executive Director
Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities

Frank Yulo
Executive Director
Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents

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Committee: Improving Communication between the Department of Children and Families, the State Department of Education and Connecticut School Systems

Joseph Castagnola, Superintendent, Portland Schools, Chairman
Thomas G. Badway, Education Consultant, Bureau of Special Education and Pupil Services, State Department of Education
Lawrence Berliner, Attorney, Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities
Donna Cambria, Superintendent, Unified School District II, Department of Children and Families
Richard Cormier, Assistant Superintendent, Middletown Schools
Albert Coviello, Superintendent, Clinton Schools
Thomas Gilman, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Children and Families
Virginia Grzymkowski, Legislative Coordinator, CAPSS
Kristine Ragaglia, Commissioner, Department of Children and Families
Theodore S. Sergi, Commissioner, State Department of Education
Michael Wasta, Assistant Superintendent, Bristol Schools
Lee Williamson, Education Consultant, Office of Legal Affairs, State Department of Education
Frank Yulo, Executive Director, CAPSS

I. Reporting by School Personnel of Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect to the Department of Children and Families

A. Mandated Reporters

A mandated reporter must report suspected cases of child abuse (Section 17a-101a)

Mandated reporters include school teachers, principals, guidance counselors, and paraprofessionals. Mandated reporters also include: registered or licensed practical nurses, psychologists, social workers, physical therapists, or any other person paid to care for a student in any school program, while acting in their professional capacity. (Section 17a-101(b)).

B. Signs of Abuse and Neglect

Abuse and neglect can present itself in a variety of circumstances. Among them are:

- physical injury or injuries inflicted upon a student other than by accidental means;
- injury at variance with the history given of such injury;
- maltreatment such as malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment;
- non-accidental physical injury;
- injury which is at variance with the history given of such injury, inflicted upon a student by a person responsible for such student's health, welfare or care or by a person given access to such student by a responsible person;
- imminent risk of serious harm to a student by an act or failure to act on the part of a person responsible for such student's health, welfare or care;
- neglected, i.e., abandoned or denied proper care and attention, physically, educationally, emotionally, or morally; and,
- living under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his or her well being.

C. Reporting Procedure

A mandated reporter, who has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any student under the age of eighteen has been abused or neglected, must report the suspected case of child abuse or neglect. The reporting procedure is as follows:

1. An oral report shall be made within twenty-four hours of having reasonable cause to suspect or believe abuse or neglect has occurred. Such report is to be made by telephone to the DCF Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline, 1-800-842-2288 or in person at a DCF regional office (See Appendix A) or by telephone or in person to a local law enforcement agency (Section 17a-101b(a)); and

2. If a mandated reporter has reasonable cause to suspect the abuse or neglect has been caused by a member of the staff of a school district (or a public or private institution or facility that provides education or care for students) notification shall also be made to the person in charge of the school or facility. (Section 17a-101b(d)).

3. The person in charge of the facility shall then immediately notify the student's parent or other person responsible for the student's care that a report has been made. (Section17a-101b(d)).

4. Within forty-eight hours of making an oral report, a written report (Form DCF-136 Revised 10/96, if available) (See Appendix B) shall be submitted by the mandated reporter to the Commissioner of Children and Families or to the regional office of the DCF. (Section 17a-101c).

5. In the case of a public or private school, institution or facility that provides education or care the report shall be submitted to the person in charge of such school, institution or facility, or that person's designee. (Section 17a-101c).

6. The mandated reporter shall submit a copy of the DCF 136 report to the person in charge of the school or facility, or that person's designee. (Section 17a-101c).

7. The person in charge of the school, institution or facility shall send a copy of the written report to the Commissioner of Education or his representative if the report concerns a certified school employee. (Section 17a-101c). (See Appendix A).

8. The mandated reporter shall send a copy of the written report to the executive head of the state licensing agency in the case of an employee of a facility or institution which is licensed by the state that provides education or care for a student. (Section 17a-101c).

D. FAILURE TO REPORT

1. Any school district employee required to report who fails to make such report shall be subject to a fine of not more than five hundred dollars. (Section 17a-101a). However, any school employee who, in good faith, makes or, in good faith, does not make a report shall be immune from civil or criminal liability. The employee shall have the same immunity with respect to any judicial proceeding which results from such report provided such person did not perpetrate or cause such abuse or neglect. (Section 17a-101e(b)).

2. Any school district employee who knowingly makes a false report shall be subject to a statutory fine of not more than two thousand dollars or imprisonment not more than one year or both. (Section 17a-101e(c)). If the Commissioner of the DCF or a designee suspects or knows that a school district employee has knowingly made a false report, the identity of such employee shall be disclosed to the appropriate law enforcement agency and to the perpetrator of the alleged abuse or neglect.

3. A school district employee, other than a mandated reporter, who has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a student is in danger of being abused, or has been abused or neglected, may file a written or oral report with DCF or a local law enforcement agency. Telephone calls to DCF should be made to the DCF Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline, 1-800-842-2288.

Recommended Practice: If there is any doubt — make the report.

No person at any level of authority within the school district, or from any other agency, may prohibit or interfere with reporting of suspected abuse or neglect to DCF. Likewise, the school district shall not discharge, discriminate or retaliate against any school district employee who makes a good faith report. These prohibitions also apply to someone who testifies or is about to testify in any proceeding involving abuse or neglect. (Section 17a-101e(a)).

E. Contents of the Report

All oral and written reports of suspected abuse or neglect should contain, if known, the following information:

1. name and address of the student;
2. names and addresses of the parents or other person responsible for the student's care;
3. age or birthdate of the student;
4. gender of the student;
5. nature and extent of the student's injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
6. approximate date and time the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect occurred;
7. information concerning any previous injury or injuries to, or maltreatment or neglect of, the student or his or her siblings;
8. circumstances in which the injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect came to be known to the reporter;
9. name of the person or persons suspected to be responsible for causing such injury or injuries, maltreatment or neglect;
10. action, if any, taken to treat, provide shelter or otherwise assist the student; and,
11. name and address of the person reporting the suspected abuse or neglect. (Section 17a-101d).

F. Release of Reporter's Name

The name of the individual reporting the suspected abuse or neglect shall not be disclosed without his written consent except to:

1. an employee of DCF responsible for child protective services or the abuse registry;
2. a law enforcement officer;
3. an appropriate state's attorney;
4. an appropriate assistant attorney general;
5. a judge of the superior court and all necessary parties in a court proceeding related to a petition for a neglected, an uncared-for or a dependent child, a petition for commitment of child, or a criminal prosecution involving child abuse or neglect; or
6. a state child care licensing agency, executive director of any institution, school or facility or superintendent of schools after an investigation by DCF reveals reasonable cause to believe that a student had been abused by a certified public school employee. (Section 17a-28(i)).

The name of any school employee who cooperates with a DCF investigation shall be kept confidential upon the request of such employee or upon determination by DCF that disclosure of such information may be detrimental to the safety or interests of the individual. However, the name of such individual shall be disclosed to the persons listed above.

G. DCF INVESTIGATION

Upon receipt of a report of suspected abuse or neglect, DCF will classify and evaluate the report immediately.[1] If the report contains sufficient information concerning imminent risk of physical harm to the student, or other emergency, DCF will make its best efforts to commence an investigation within two hours. It will commence an investigation of all other reports within seventy-two hours of receipt of the report. (Section 17a-101g(a)).

DCF will complete its investigation within thirty calendar days of receipt of the report. (Section 17a-101g(a)).

DCF shall be the lead administrative investigatory agency and responsible for the coordination of the investigation unless the student is a person with mental retardation who is over the age of eighteen years of age, in which case P&A is the lead administrative investigatory agency.

In order to minimize the number of interviews of a student, DCF will share information with other agencies authorized to conduct an investigation of suspected abuse or neglect, as appropriate. (Section 17a-101h). DCF will consult and determine which agency will take the lead in the investigation. (BEST PRACTICE).

The investigation may necessitate a school visit including an interview with the student. Prior to any interview with a student, DCF will obtain the consent of the parent or guardian or other person responsible for the care of the student. (Section 17a-101h).

However, DCF need not obtain consent when it has reason to believe that a parent or guardian, or other person responsible for the care of the student, or member of the student's household, is the perpetrator of the alleged abuse or neglect. (Section 17a-101h).

If consent is not required to conduct the interview, the interview shall be conducted in the presence of a disinterested adult. However, this will not happen if immediate access to the student is necessary to protect the student from imminent risk of physical harm and a disinterested adult is not available after reasonable search. (BEST PRACTICE).

School district personnel shall cooperate with DCF. (Section 17a-106).

Unless extenuating circumstances exist, DCF is expected to schedule a school interview with the school principal when investigating reports of suspected abuse or neglect by a school employee.

[1] The initial assessment of potential risk to the child will be designated as: (1) "emergency." (2) "severe" or (3) "non-severe." "Emergency" categorizations will initiate an investigation the same say the case is reported. The investigation for a "severe" case will commence within the day following a report. The investigation for "non-severe" cases will commence within three working days of the receipt of the report. Section 17a-101(e)-4 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

DCF shall provide as much notice as possible. Upon arrival at the school, the DCF employee shall provide appropriate identification. If DCF does not arrive prior to school dismissal, school personnel shall detain the student provided prior authorization has been given by DCF. Such notification should be in writing.

DCF may determine that there is probable cause to believe that the student is in imminent risk of physical harm in his or her surroundings. It may also determine that immediate removal from the surroundings is necessary to ensure the student's safety. If such a determination is made, DCF, or any law enforcement agency authorized by DCF, may remove the student from the school setting without the consent of the parent or guardian pursuant to a "96-hour hold." (Section 17a-101g(c)(d)). In addition, a court may issue an Order of Temporary Custody (OTC) placing temporary custody of the child in DCF. An OTC would also authorize DCF to remove the child from the school setting without the parent's or guardian's consent. (Section 46b-129(b)).

H. INVESTIGATION REPORT

Based upon the results of its investigation, DCF will make a determination of whether there is reasonable cause to believe that a public school employee has abused a child. DCF shall notify the employing superintendent of the results of its investigation. Also, DCF shall provide records concerning such investigation, as it deems appropriate. The records need not have been created by DCF. (Section 17a-101i(a)).

The superintendent shall be notified by DCF when there is reasonable cause to believe that a school employee has abused a student. If the employee is a certified professional employee, then that employee must be suspended. The superintendent may suspend any other school employee. The suspension of either shall be with pay or shall not result in the diminution or termination of benefits to such employee. (Section 17a-101i(a)).

Within seventy-two hours after the suspension of a certified professional employee, the superintendent shall notify the local board of education and the Commissioner of Education of the reasons for and the conditions of the suspension. The superintendent shall disclose the records provided by DCF to the Commissioner of Education and the local board of education or their attorneys for purposes of review of the employment status or certification. (Section 17a-101i(a)).

The suspension of a certified employee shall remain in effect until the local board of education acts pursuant to Section 10-151. If the contract of employment of the certified school employee is terminated, the superintendent shall notify the Commissioner of Education within seventy-two hours after such termination. Upon receipt of such notice from the superintendent, the Commissioner of Education may commence certification revocation proceedings. (Section 17a-101i(a)).

However, it is recommended that superintendents file a Request to Revoke the terminated employee's certificate rather than have the Commissioner of Education initiate the revocation procedure. (Section 10-145d-612 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies).

In the case of any other employee, the suspension shall remain in effect until the incident of abuse has been satisfactorily resolved by the local board of education. (Section 17a-101i(b)).

If a school employee is convicted of a crime involving an act of child abuse or neglect, the state's attorney shall notify, in writing, the superintendent of the school district in which the person is employed and the Commissioner of Education. Upon such notification, the certificate of the certified educator is automatically revoked. (Section 17a-101i(c) and Section 10-145b(m)).

II. Reporting by School Personnel of Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Person with Mental Retardation to the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities

A. MANDATED REPORTERS

Mandated reporters include school teachers, principals, guidance counselors and paraprofessionals. Mandated reporters also include registered or licensed practical nurses, psychologists, physicians, social workers, mental health professionals, physical therapists, occupational therapists and speech and language pathologists. (Section 46a-11b(a))

B. SIGNS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

Abuse means:

- Willful infliction of physical pain or injury; or
- Willful deprivation by a caretaker of services which are necessary to the person's health or safety (Section 46a-11a(a)).

Neglect means:

- a situation where a person with mental retardation is living alone is not able to provide the services necessary to maintain his or her physical or mental health; or
- is not receiving necessary services from the caretaker.

Note: A caretaker means a person who has responsibility for the care of a person with mental retardation. This caretaker role can arise as a result of a family relationship or by the voluntary assumption for the care of the person with mental retardation, by contract or by order of a court of competent jurisdiction. Neither a guardian nor a conservator need be a caretaker.

C. REPORTING PROCEDURES

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to suspect or believe that any person with mental retardation has been abused or neglected must report it to P&A. For school district employees this would mean a student eighteen years of age and older who is being provided an educational program through the school district. (Section 46a-11b)

The report must be made within five calendar days of suspecting the abuse or neglect. It is acceptable for the mandated reporter to have another make the report. The report shall be followed up by a written report within five additional calendar days. (Section 46a-11b(a)).

The report should be made to the director of the Office of Protection and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities, 60B Weston Street, Hartford, CT. 06120-1551, (860) 297-4300 or 1-800-842-7303. (Form PA-6 Revised 1/94) (See Appendix B)

Other public school employees having reasonable cause to believe that a person with mental retardation is being abused or has been abused or neglected may report such information, in any reasonable manner, to the director of the P & A. (Section 46a-11b(d)).

Any reporter of suspected abuse or neglect who makes any report or who testifies in any administrative or judicial proceeding arising from such report, shall be immune from both civil and criminal liability on account of the report or testimony unless such person acted in bad faith or with malicious purpose. Except, immunity does not attach for liability for perjury.

Any school district employee who obstructs, hinders or endangers any person reporting or investigating abuse or neglect or providing protective services or makes a report in bad faith or with malicious purpose and who is not subject to any other penalty, shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars. (Section 46a-11b(e)).

No public school employee reporting suspected abuse or neglect shall be subject to reprisal or discharge from the school district because of his or her reporting.

D. FAILURE TO REPORT

Failure of a mandated reporter to report may result in a fine of not more than five hundred dollars. (Section 46a-11b(a)).

E. CONTENTS OF THE REPORT

All oral and written reports of suspected abuse or neglect of a person with mental retardation should contain, if known:

1) the name and address of the student;
2) a statement from the person making the report indicating his or her belief that such student is mentally retarded;
3) information supporting the supposition that such student is substantially unable to protect himself or herself from abuse or neglect;
4) information regarding the nature and extent of the abuse or neglect ;
5) any other information which might be helpful in an investigation of the case and the protection of such student; and,
6) the name and address of the person reporting the suspected abuse or neglect. (Section 46a-11b(b)).

F. RELEASE OF REPORTER'S NAME

The name of the reporter making the original report shall not be disclosed to any person unless such person consents to such disclosure or unless a judicial proceeding results from the report. (Section 46a-11c(c)).

G. P&A Investigation

If the student is a person with mental retardation over the age of eighteen, P&A shall be the lead investigatory agency. It shall be responsible for the coordination of the investigation. If the student is between eighteen to twenty-one years old and is a client of DCF, P&A and DCF will consult and determine which agency will serve as the lead investigatory agency.

Upon receipt of a report of suspected abuse or neglect, P&A shall make a determination whether such student has mental retardation. It shall also determine if the report warrants investigation. If an investigation is warranted, a prompt and thorough evaluation will be made to determine whether the student has been abused or neglected. The evaluation may include a visit to the school to interview the student and consultation with those individuals having particularized knowledge. (Section 46a-11c(a)).

If P&A substantiates the allegations of abuse or neglect, the agency can recommend a plan of protective services to DMR. In certain cases, P&A may request immediate protective services if the agency's initial assessment establishes that the student is seriously in need of such protective services.

P&A investigators are authorized to have access to and may review and copy any records that are determined to be relevant to the investigation. In addition, P&A may subpoena any information that may be relevant to the agency's investigation. Many adult students with mental retardation are their own guardians, therefore, P&A school visits to such students do not require prior notification and parental consent, under such circumstances.

H. Investigation Report

Upon request to P&A, the school district employee filing the report of suspected abuse or neglect shall be notified of the findings upon request. The results of any P&A investigation shall not be disclosed, reproduced, or released to any third party in absence of written authorization from P&A.

III. Recommended Policy Guidelines

A. Policy and Procedure Development

Each local and regional board of education shall adopt a written policy regarding the reporting by school employees of suspected child abuse (Section 17a-101i(e)), and suspected abuse or neglect of individuals with mental retardation who are over eighteen years old (Section 46a-11b(c)).

Recommendations:

1) When developing a policy, include appropriate persons in the process. Consider including: administrators, teachers, nurses, social workers, psychologists, guidance counselors and paraprofessionals; parent representatives; law enforcement personnel and community and state agency abuse and neglect investigators and other professionals.

2) Consult with the school medical advisor and legal counsel.

3) Consult with DCF and P&A.

4) Collaborate with local health care providers and other community service providers.

B. Policy Characteristics

Abuse and neglect affect a student's ability to optimize educational opportunities. Therefore, your policy should seek to prevent, identify, report and effectively intervene in instances of abuse and neglect. It should contain at least three major components: education, intervention, and evaluation.

Recommendations:

1) Education

- In-service programs related to the recognition and reporting of suspected abuse and neglect should be developed, regularly updated and incorporated into the district's staff development plan.
- DCF and P&A have developed training programs which can easily be incorporated into a district program.
- DCF presentations and educational materials are available through the DCF Training Academy (860-550-6693) or through your DCF liaison.
- P&A programs are available through the Abuse Investigation Division (860-297-4355).

2) Intervention

- Your policy should provide specific protocols for the assessment, reporting, documentation and follow-up of suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.
- The protocol should address procedures for the cooperation with DCF, P&A, law enforcement officials and support services.

- The protocol should include a provision on a mandated reporter who fails to report a suspected case of abuse or neglect.

3) Evaluation

- Your policy should incorporate provisions for regular review and, as appropriate, revision.

C. Education Procedures

School personnel need to be trained to recognize, report and intervene in instances of suspected abuse and neglect, while understanding that the ultimate determination of abuse or neglect rests with DCF or P&A. They should also be trained to recognize situations in which a student may be in danger of being abused.

The substantive content of an education program should include:

- dynamics and prevalence of the different types of abuse and neglect;
- predisposing factors that put students at risk of abuse and neglect;
- factors that place adults at risk as perpetrators;
- effects of abuse and neglect on students;
- signs and symptoms of each form of abuse or neglect;
- legal requirements of reporting suspected abuse and neglect (17a-101(b)and 17a-101a; 46a-11b);
- legal protections for making a good faith report;
- legal sanctions for failure to report (17a-101a; 46a-11b(a));
- role and responsibility of law enforcement officials;
- role and responsibility of DCF and P&A;
- procedures to follow whenever school personnel suspect abuse or neglect;
- contents of a good report; and
- school district policy on disciplinary action for failure to report, interference with making a report and making a false report.

Finally, because of the potential impact of abuse and neglect, it is important to provide opportunities for staff to consider and appreciate their own strengths and limitations in working with students and their families when abuse or neglect is suspected or confirmed.

D. Intervention Policy and Procedures

The goal of your intervention policy should be to (1) protect the health and safety of individual students who may have been abused or neglected or are in danger of being abused; and (2) ensure compliance with the law.

As a preferred practice, it is suggested that each school in your district have a designated clinical intervention team. Suggested personnel for such team would include the school nurse, one or more support personnel and the school principal. The role of a clinical intervention team would be to assess the immediate health and safety needs of the student, while waiting for a DCF or P&A

response. Additionally, the team would support students and school personnel throughout the reporting process; monitor affected students; and work with families, DCF, P&A and other community service providers.

E. Recommended Guidelines for the Development of Procedures: Assessment of Student's Immediate Health and Safety Needs

School personnel should make a reasonable inquiry after a student reports an injury or has a visible, unusual or serious injury. If abuse or neglect is suspected then it must be reported. After making a report, the reporter should confer with the school's clinical intervention team. The team should make an assessment of a student's immediate physical and mental health needs. Such assessment should be coordinated, whenever possible, with DCF or P&A response systems.

If the reporter is concerned that the student may have an urgent health problem, the reporter should immediately notify the school nurse and school principal. After that notification, the reporter should file the report with DCF or P&A as warranted.

If a physical and emotional assessment of the student is appropriate, a targeted history should be obtained by a school nurse or by support personnel (e.g., school social worker, school psychologist or school guidance counselor). If no qualified health professional or support personnel is available in the school or from a nearby school, the principal may wish to seek advice from DCF or P&A and other community experts.

Questioning of the student should be limited to determining the existence of an emergency or of immediate health and safety needs. Too many people questioning a student may prove detrimental to the student and may impede effective intervention by DCF, P&A, law enforcement or the courts.

If physical assessment of the child is indicated, it must be done in accordance with school district policy and procedures. These procedures must note that such assessment be performed by the school nurse or school medical advisor. Physical assessment would be determined to be appropriate when:

- a student has, by word or action, identified a particular injury that would require immediate emergency care and the extent of which could only be determined by removing the student's clothing; and
- the student clearly understands that compliance with the request to examine him or her is voluntary and that no adverse consequences will result from a refusal to comply with such a request.

The nurse or medical advisor may determine that it is appropriate to have a witness (preferably another health professional) present during the physical assessment. The witness can be in the proximity of the examining area, that is, able to hear the interaction rather than in direct sight of the student. This will protect the student's privacy. Physical assessment is not indicated when sufficient information is already available to determine that immediate referral to a medical facility for further assessment or treatment is warranted.

F. Recommended Guidelines for Development of Procedures: Management Actions

When the report has been made to DCF or P&A and the assessment of the student's health status is complete, the team should determine what, if any, additional management actions are needed. Such management actions may include, but are not limited to:

- emergency transportation to a hospital or medical facility;
- nursing care for the student's injury;
- meeting with the parent or guardian to initiate communication and support in the proceeding circumstances;
- detainment of the student after school until the DCF or DMR social worker arrives;
- notification to the parent, guardian or caretaker, when it is suspected that the student has been abused or neglected by a member of the school staff or someone other than the parent, guardian or caretaker;
- meeting with the parent/guardian to initiate communication and support in the above circumstance, if such individuals are not suspected of or otherwise implicated in the alleged abuse or neglect;
- appropriate interim personnel measures for school personnel, pending the completion of the investigation;
- notification to the law enforcement agency when a parent, guardian or alleged perpetrator is anticipated to be threatening or violent; and
- managing the media.

When the parent, guardian or caretaker is the alleged perpetrator, DCF or P&A, as appropriate, shall notify the parent, guardian or caretaker. As in any other medical emergency, a representative of the school should accompany the student to a health care facility. The representative should remain with the student until the student's parent or guardian arrives or other arrangements are made by DCF, P&A or by the examining physician of the facility.

G. Guidelines for the Development of Procedures: Investigations Involving a Certified School Employee

The school district should take appropriate action to protect the safety of the student and other students during an investigation. This is especially true when allegations have been made against a certified school employee. However, school district actions should protect the student while concomitantly ensuring that the due process rights of the employee are preserved.

As with any case involving potential discipline, the employee is entitled to representation by the collective bargaining agent at any meeting involving the employee convened by the school district administration. This would be true whether or not DCF or P&A are present. Failure to adhere to the rules regarding union representation may jeopardize the school district's ability to take disciplinary action at the conclusion of the investigation.

It might be determined that the employee should not have contact with the student. If this is the case, it may be necessary to temporarily reassign the student or the employee.

The school district policy should identify the consequences to certified and non-certified employees if the investigation indicates that there is evidence of abuse. Conversely, the policy should indicate the steps that the school district will follow when the investigation indicates that abuse is not substantiated.

At the conclusion of the investigation, DCF will provide the superintendent with a written report of the investigative findings. Additionally, if a determination of abuse is made, DCF or P&A will provide the report to the state's attorney and appropriate law enforcement agencies.

H. Guidelines for the Development of Procedures: Documentation and Recordkeeping

School personnel should keep appropriate records of all assessments, observations, recommendations and actions. These records would include a log of the time and sequence of any significant events occurring during the initial intervention and reporting process. Pertinent information not included on the DCF-136 or PA-6 report form should be attached to it or subsequently forwarded to DCF or P&A.

The school nurse should update the student's health record, as appropriate.

All records relating to suspected abuse or neglect of a student are to be maintained in a confidential manner. The school district's copy of the DCF-136 form or the PA-6 form should be maintained in a limited access file, e.g. in the Cumulative Health Record. However, if school personnel are making subsequent abuse or neglect reports, they should be aware that records are maintained by the school nurse.

In the event that the media is alerted to an investigation of a teacher by DCF, a school district should consult with their legal counsel. It may want to direct questions to the Office of Public Information at DCF (860-550-6361). As a general rule, P&A will decline to discuss any abuse and neglect investigations with the media. Disclosure by a school district of personally identifiable information from a student's education records may be made only to the extent such disclosure is permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

I. Cooperation of School Personnel in an Investigation

The school district should provide a setting for any interview that protects the student's privacy. School personnel shall cooperate with DCF, P&A and law enforcement agencies during their investigation.

If physical assessment or removal of clothing is considered during the investigation, the school district's procedures shall be followed.

If DCF decides to remove the student from the school, DCF shall present authorized documentation from the DCF Commissioner or designee for such removal.

If P&A decides that removal of the student, under its jurisdiction, from the school is necessary, the Department of Mental Retardation (DMR), on notice from P&A, will undertake this responsibility.

Upon request from DCF, P&A or any law enforcement agency, and to the extent permitted by FERPA, a school district may disclose personally identifiable information from the education record of the student. The requested information should be necessary to protect the health or safety of the student, as well as to assist with the investigation.

The school district shall cooperate with DCF, P&A and any law enforcement agency. This cooperation may include releasing any information in possession of the school district that may be germane or relevant to the investigation. DCF, P&A or a law enforcement agency may exercise subpoena powers to compel the release of information related to the investigation.

J. Guidelines for the Development of Procedures: Support Services and Long-Term Monitoring

Members of the clinical intervention team, and other appropriate school personnel, should continuously monitor and assist the student.

If there is suspicion that the student still may be subject to abuse or neglect, another report should be made to DCF or P&A, regardless of the outcome of any previous report. Such subsequent reports may provide DCF or P&A with sufficient data to initiate action even in cases where one or more previous referrals were rejected or substantiated.

It is also appropriate for the team to provide support services for the student and to assist the family, especially in the area of accessing community resources. The school team should collaborate with DCF, P&A and other community services providers so that intervention strategies are consistent and coordinated.

Finally, with the consent of the parents, if appropriate, the team members should keep other appropriate school personnel and service providers informed of changes in the student's health status or behaviors in school and should revise the plan of support or intervention as needed.

Procedures should address support services that would be available to employees who are reported as possible perpetrators.

K. Evaluation Procedures

Your policy should provide for a periodic evaluation process for each component. The evaluation should assess whether your policy and procedures are effective in light of changes in personnel, student and family needs, community resources and law.

Those school personnel and community experts who assisted in the development of your district's policy and procedures should also collaborate in the evaluation process.

Revised: 12/08/99

APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
REGIONAL OFFICES

OFFICE OF PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY
FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

APPENDIX A

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REGIONAL OFFICES:

South West Office	Mary Solera, Regional Administrator	203-365-6300
3885 Main Street	Kathleen Bahe, Program Dir.	203-365-6387
Bridgeport, CT 06606	Judith Kallen, Program Dir.	203-365-6381
203-365-6200	Nancy Wilcox-Marchetti, Program Dir.	203-365-6379
Fax: 203-365-6398 (RA's Office)	Annie Christy, Program Supv.	203-365-6270
Fax: 203-377-2663	Lisa Daymonde, Program Supv.-Invest.	203-365-6272
	Dorothy Hamilton, Program Supv.	203-365-6274
	Nicole McKelvey-Welsh, Program Supv.	203-365-6267
	Johnathan Jacaruso, Program Supv.	203-365-6306
401 Shippan Avenue	Alexandra Molina, Program Supv.-Invest.	203-965-0127
Stamford, CT 06902		
203-348-4294		
Fax: 203-964-9501		
25 Van Zant Street, Suite 15-A	Adrienne Barr, Program Supv.-Invest.	203-899-1401
Norwalk, CT 06855		
203-899-1400		
Fax: 203-853-3821		
South Central Office	Jim Carr, Regional Administrator	203-786-0603
One Long Wharf	Shirley Brinkley, Program Dir.	203-786-0601
New Haven, CT 06511	Michael Steers, Program Dir.	203-786-0608
203-786-0500	Thomas Buch, Program Supv.	203-786-3332
Fax: 203-777-4317	Hedwig Gryszan, Program Supv.	203-786-0642
	David Jones, Program Supv.	203-786-3337
	Doreen Kearson, Program Supv.	203-786-0602
	Bonnie Laroche, Program Supv.	203-786-0500
	Cathy Lee, Program Supv.	203-786-0610
	Rita Pelaggi, Program Supv.	203-786-0613
	Sheila Pigott, Program Supv.	203-786-0600
	Quadry Harris, Program Supv.	203-786-0615

121 Main Street Ext. **Middletown, CT 06457** **860-638-2100** **Fax: 860-346-2585**	Patricia Simpson, Program Dir. Tracey Shoemaker, Prog.Supv.-Invest.	860-683-2156 860-638-2123
Undercliff Road, Whitehall **Meriden, CT 06451** **203-238-6185** **Fax: 203-238-6387**	Deborah Collins, Acting Prog. Supv.-Invest. Bernadette Uluski, Prog. Supv.-Invest.	203-238-6399 203-238-6386
Eastern Office **2 Courthouse Square** **Norwich, CT 06360** **860-886-2641** **Fax: 860-885-1300**	Karl Kemper, Regional Admin. Charles Lindberg, Prog. Dir. Gene Marchand, Prog. Supv. Kyle Parkinson, Prog.Supv.-Invest. Antonio Saez, Prog. Supv. Carmen Sands, Prog. Supv. Susan Wax, Prog. Supv. Antonio Donis, Prog. Supv.	860-885-2440 860-885-2436 860-885-2478 860-885-2401 860-885-2476 860-885-2563 860-885-2471 860-885-2562
Eastern Office – Continued **1320 Main Street, Tyler Sq.** **Willimantic, CT 06226** **860-450-2050** **Fax: 860-423-5034**	Jim Belisle, Prog. Dir. Karen Miskunas, Prog. Supv. Kim Nelson, Prog. Supv.-Invest. Dick Szegda, Prog. Supv.	860-450-2010 860-450-2020 860-450-2022 860-450-2012
North Central Office **250 Hamilton Street** **Hartford, CT 06105** **860-418-8000** **Fax: 860-418-8327**	Leticia Lacomba, Regional Admin. Gail Bakulski, Prog. Dir. Nellie Cartegena, Prog. Dir. Charlotte May, Prog. Dir. Jean Watson, Prog. Dir. Kimberly Meldrum-Clark, Prog. Supv. Darlene Dukes, Prog.Supv. Malika Robledo, Prog. Supv. Linda Harris, Prog. Supv.-Invest. Linda Kogut, Prog. Supv. Stan Kasanowski, Prog. Supv.-Invest. Lisa Sedlock-Reider, Prog. Supv. Paul Shanley, Prog. Supv. Art Teal, Prog. Supv. Sarah Thompson, Prog. Supv.	860-418-8312 860-418-8401 860-418-8308 860-418-8236 860-418-8010 860-418-8404 860-418-8303 860-418-8306 860-418-8304 860-418-8453 860-418-8298 860-418-8305 860-418-8302 860-418-8301 860-418-8171
One Grove Street **4th Floor** **New Britain, CT 06053** **860-832-5200** **Fax: 832-5318**	Christine Lau, Prog. Dir. Bob Lapadula, Prog. Supv. Janyce Foote, Prog. Supv. Raymond Madore, Prog. Supv.	860-832-5201 860-832-5202 860-832-5203 860-832-5239

364 West Middle Turnpike	Susan Bombardier, Prog. Dir.	860-533-3601
Manchester, CT 06040	Patti Franco, Prog. Supv.	860-533-3775
860-533-3600	Jimmy Moore, Prog. Supv.-Invest.	860-533-3708
Fax: 860-522-3750	Janet LaBelle, Prog. Supv.	860-533-3706
	Kelly McVey, Prog. Supv.	860-533-3713
North West Office	Darlene Dunbar, Regional Admin.	203-759-7211
395 West Main Street	Carl Graham-Leichner, Prog. Dir.	203-759-7247
Waterbury, CT 06702	George Doyle, Prog. Supv.	203-759-7214
203-759-7200	Cheryl Wood-Owens, Prog. Supv.-Invest.	203-759-7003
Fax: 203-759-7296	Patricia Zuccarelli, Prog. Supv.-Invest.	203-759-7002
	Wayne Kamens, Prog. Supv.	203-759-7282
	Bette Randlett, Prog. Supv.	203-759-7001
131 West Street	Ralph Arnone, Prog. Supv.-Invest.	203-207-5102
Danbury, CT 06810	Ileana Velazquez, Prog. Supv.	203-207-5172
203-207-5100		
Fax: 203-207-5170		
62 Commerical Blvd.	Myra Helt, Prog. Supv.-Invest.	860-496-5701
Torrington, CT 06790		

OFFICE OF PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY
FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
Abuse/Neglect Investigations Unit
60B Weston Street
Hartford, CT 06120-1551

Unit Director	**1-860-297-4355**
Agency Front Desk	**1-860-297-4300**
Agency Front Desk	**1-800-842-7303**
Unit Director Fax:	**1-860-297-4384**

APPENDIX B

FORM: **REPORT OF SUSPECTED ABUSE OF AN ADULT WITH MENTAL RETARDATION**

FORM: **REPORT OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT**

Connecticut State Department of Education

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